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DAKOTA TELECOM, INC.

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MN AND IA WATS 800-239-7501

October 13, 1997

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FCC MAIL ROOM

Mr. William F. Caton, Acting Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.,
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Secretary Caton:

Please accept this letter of support for the nomination of Thomas W. Hertz for a position on the Rural Task Force (RTF). Mr. Hertz is seeking nomination to Category 2, rural competition local exchange carriers, their associations, or their consultants.

I serve as the Executive Vice President, Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer of Dakota Telecom, Inc. ("DTI"), of Irene, South Dakota. DTI serves over 5,400 CATV customers with cable operations in twenty-six communities in South Dakota, Iowa and Minnesota.

Mr. Hertz came to DTI in the fall of 1995. DTI was the first competitive local exchange carrier in the State of South Dakota to apply for authority to provide competitive local exchange service to customers. DTI is building a network to provide facility based operations. Mr. Hertz, DTI's President and CEO, provides the leadership qualities necessary to guide the company through new growth.

Mr. Hertz is an excellent candidate for the position and will bring to the Board the necessary telecommunication knowledge, skills and background to be an effective and contributing Board member.

Sincerely,

Craig A. Anderson
Executive Vice President/CFO

Enclosures

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BIOGRAPHY

Thomas W. Hertz
29801 County Road 11
Menno, South Dakota 57045-7221
Phone: 605-387-5696

Education

Graduate of Menno High School (1964), South Dakota School of Mines and Technology (1968, B.S. in Metallurgical Engineering) and University of South Dakota Law School (1977, J.D. - Law).

Experience

Student, well-driller, farm hand, draftsman, lab assistant, miner and truck driver, in South Dakota, Oregon, Minnesota, Michigan and Iowa (1960-1968); civilian Nuclear Engineer/Project Engineer, U.S. Navy, Bremerton, Washington (1968-1974); nuclear metallurgy Ph. D. program, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa (1974-1975); practicing attorney, *ULMER, HERTZ & BERTSCH, P.C.*, Menno, South Dakota (1977-1995); Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, Dakota Telecommunications Group, Inc. (1995-present).

Thomas W. Hertz

Ulmer, Hertz & Bertsch, P.C.
219 South 5th Street, P.O. Box 535
Menno, South Dakota 57045-0535
Phone 605/387-5658 FAX 605-387-2322

Objective: General Manager of Dakota Cooperative Telecommunications, Inc.

Personal and Family

Born March 7, 1946, Viborg, South Dakota
Married (25+ years, Mary Sayler Hertz), two children (Sara & Elizabeth)
Member, Grace Lutheran Church, Menno, South Dakota

Professional Experience

January 1978 to Present

Ulmer, Hertz & Bertsch, P.C.
Menno, South Dakota
Managing Attorney, with primary practice in the area of cooperative and regulatory law, secondary practice in corporate and tax law, estate planning, and general practice

July 1968 to July 1974

Puget Sound Naval Shipyard
Bremerton, Washington
Nuclear Engineer, Project Engineer, coordinating overhaul of nuclear submarines and nuclear-powered surface ships.

Other Work Experience

June 1960 to June 1968

general farm labor, southeastern South Dakota
well driller, Menno, South Dakota
Chicken & turkey ranch labor, Beaverton, Oregon
lab technician, Rapid City, South Dakota
civil draftsman, City of Rapid City, South Dakota
engineering assistant, taconite plant, Beaver Bay, Minnesota
engineering assistant, iron mine, Ispeming, Michigan

Education

1975 to 1977

University of South Dakota - Law School
Vermillion, South Dakota
J.D. (law)

1974 to 1975

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
one year as graduate student in PhD program in Nuclear Metallurgy

1964 to 1968

South Dakota School of Mines & Technology
Rapid City, South Dakota
B.S. Metallurgical Engineering.

Representative Clients

Dakota Cooperative Telecommunications, Inc.

Irene, South Dakota

General Counsel

Turner Hutchinson Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Marion, South Dakota

General Counsel

Baltic Telecom Cooperative

Baltic, South Dakota

Regulatory and litigation matters

Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative

Clear Lake, South Dakota

regulatory and litigation matters

Farmers Union Oil Co.

Menno, South Dakota

General Counsel

FREMAR Farmers Cooperative

Marion, South Dakota

Merger, General Counsel

Broin Enterprises, Broin & Associates (ethanol plants, design, operation and construction)

Scotland, South Dakota and Sioux Falls, South Dakota

South Dakota General Counsel